

IN THE CLAIMS:

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions of claims in the application:

1. (currently amended) A disposable absorbent article having an area which is visible when the article is worn, a color gradation in said area providing a coloration which varies in intensity over the area from a higher intensity of color to a lower intensity of color when the area is dry, ~~said gradation defining a gradual progression through successive stages of intensity of coloration,~~ and a visible element separate from said color gradation and disposed in said area at a location where the coloration of said color gradation is of lower intensity or absent such that the visible element remains visible and is not obscured by the color gradation.

2. (original) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 1 wherein said visible element is a graphic.

3. (original) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 1 wherein said visible element is a registration mark.

4. (original) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 1 wherein said visible element is a wetness indicator.

5. (currently amended) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 4 ~~having~~ further comprising an outer cover having an interior surface and an exterior surface, and an absorbent material disposed ~~inside the cover~~ on said interior surface of the outer cover, said color gradation and said wetness indicator being disposed on ~~the~~ said outer cover.

6. (currently amended) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim [[5]] 4 wherein said wetness indicator comprises an active graphic.

7. (original) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 5 wherein the article is a pant having a front region, a back region, and a crotch region, said wetness indicator being on a portion of the crotch region which is substantially free of color.

8. (original) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 7 wherein said coloration changes from higher intensity to lower intensity generally in the direction of said crotch region.

9. (currently amended) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 7 wherein the pant further has side edges, said coloration changesing from higher intensity to lower intensity generally in the direction of ~~one or more sides of the pant~~ at least one of said side edges.

10. (original) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 8 or 9 wherein said color gradation involves only one color.

11. (original) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 8 or 9 wherein said color gradation involves a combination of different colors.

12. (original) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 1 further comprising a graphic on said article,

and a registration mark on said article for use in positioning said graphic on the article.

13. (previously presented) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 12 wherein said article is a pant having a crotch region, and wherein said registration mark is located on said crotch region.

14. (canceled).

15. (currently amended) A disposable absorbent pant having a front waist region, a back waist region and a crotch region extending between and interconnecting said front and back waist regions, said pant comprising an outer cover with an interior surface and an opposite exterior surface, an absorbent material disposed on the interior surface of the outer cover, ~~said pant further having front and back regions which define a waist region, a crotch region extending between the front and back regions,~~ a color gradation on an area of the pant which is visible when the pant is worn, said color gradation providing a coloration which varies from a higher intensity of color in the vicinity of the waist region to a lower intensity of color toward the crotch region when the pant is dry, said gradation defining a gradual progression through successive stages of intensity of coloration, and a wetness indicator separate from said color gradation and disposed in said crotch region at a location where the coloration of said color gradation is of lower intensity or absent such that any indication of wetness by the wetness indicator remains visible and is not obscured by the color gradation.

16. (original) A disposable absorbent pant as set forth in claim 15 wherein said wetness indicator comprises an active graphic.

17. (previously presented) A disposable absorbent pant as set forth in claim 15 wherein said color gradation is printed in said area.

18. (canceled).

19. (previously presented) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 1 wherein said color gradation is printed on the article in said area.

20. (previously presented) A disposable absorbent article as set forth in claim 19 wherein said color gradation is printed with a permanent ink.

21. (canceled).

22. (canceled).

23. (New) A disposable absorbent article having an area which is visible when the article is worn, a permanent graphic comprising a color gradation in said area providing a coloration which varies in intensity over the area from a higher intensity of color to a lower intensity of color, and a visible element separate from said permanent graphic and disposed in said area at a location where the coloration of said color gradation is of lower intensity or absent such that the visible element remains visible and is not obscured by the color gradation.

24. (New) A disposable absorbent article comprising a color gradation that is visible when the article is worn, said color gradation comprising a coloration that varies in intensity from an area of higher intensity of color to a separate area of lower intensity of color, and a visible element separate from said color gradation and disposed at a location where the coloration of said color gradation is of lower intensity or absent such that the visible element remains visible and is not obscured by the color gradation.